

STATE OF VERMONT  
AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES

# DCF

## Department for Children and Families

**BULLETIN NO.:** 10-16P

**FROM:** Pam Dalley, Interim Deputy Commissioner  
Economic Services Division

**DATE:** September 29, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Reach Up Eligibility and Sanction and Postsecondary Education Rules

**CHANGES ADOPTED EFFECTIVE** 2/1/2011

### INSTRUCTIONS

       Maintain Manual - See instructions below.  
  X   Proposed Regulation - Retain bulletin  
and attachments until you receive  
Manual Maintenance Bulletin: 10-16F  
       Information or Instructions - Retain  
until \_\_\_\_\_

### MANUAL REFERENCE(S):

2211	2342	2376	2400
2341	2375	2379	2451

This bulletin proposes changes to Reach Up program sanction rules to implement provisions in Act 156, “An Act Making Appropriations for the Support of Government,” (June 3, 2010). The proposed rule revises the sanction process by increasing the fiscal sanction in the second and third months of sanction and requiring an assessment before Reach Up financial assistance can be issued in the fourth month of sanction in a 12-month period. The proposed rule adds a provision for striking sanctions inappropriately imposed and for correcting the participant’s family development plan. It adds provisions to the Postsecondary Education Program rules that are necessary for the department (DCF) to claim financial assistance grants with state funds as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Maintenance of Effort. The bulletin also proposes to remove an obsolete subsection pertaining to phasing in implementation of rules at the end of Vermont’s Welfare Reform Demonstration Project in July 2001 to bring Vermont into compliance with TANF law and regulations.

### *Reach Up Sanction Amounts*

This bulletin proposes to increase the sanction amount imposed on participants subject to a fiscal sanction from \$75 to \$100 in the second cumulative month of sanction and from \$75 to \$125 in the third cumulative month of sanction.

***Assessment in Fourth Month of Reach Up Sanction in a 12-Month Period***

This bulletin proposes that to receive payments during the fourth month of sanction in a 12-month period, an adult subject to a fiscal sanction and a second participating adult in the family shall engage in an assessment that includes their employability and life skills capabilities.

***Striking Sanctions***

This bulletin proposes that a sanction shall be stricken when an assessment of employability and life skills capabilities in the fourth month of sanction in a 12-month period reveals that the sanctioned adult should have had a modified or deferred work requirement.

***Postsecondary Education Program (PSE)***

This bulletin proposes to allow the department, at the discretion of the Commissioner, to fund financial assistance of certain PSE families with state funds claimed as TANF Maintenance of Effort (MOE) when the participant is meeting a federal TANF work requirement or it furthers the purposes of specific state law. It also proposes to add a provision to the PSE Plan Requirements that the applicant for PSE specify how hours of participation will be documented and verified monthly.

***Other Changes***

To encourage and make it easier for caretakers and parents of potentially eligible children, this bulletin proposes that in child-only cases the default for application and review interviews be by telephone. By not requiring these applicants to come to the office, this process will be easier for the caretaker guardians and disabled adults, the predominant group of applicants in child-only cases. The change in process also helps to streamline the application process and should result in quicker eligibility determinations. Child-only applicant and recipient families who want to have a face-to-face interview shall be provided one upon request.

This bulletin proposes to remove obsolete rules for phasing-in implementation of compliance with the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program at the end of Vermont's Welfare Restructuring demonstration project (WRP) on July 1, 2001. It also proposes to correct rule numbering errors.

***Specific Changes to Rule Sections***

<b>Table of Contents</b>	Removes “Table – Work Ready Dates” at 2341 Removes “Implementation of Phase-In Plan” at 2342. Replaces, “Sanctions-Cure and Forgiveness” with 2376, “Sanctions-Cure, Forgiveness and Striking” at 2376. Adds Striking Sanctions at 2379.
<b>2211.2</b>	Adds provision at 2211.2 that application interviews be conducted by telephone when an individual applies for financial assistance for only a child or children, unless such applicant requests a face-to-face interview.
<b>2341.5</b>	Removes subsection 2341.5, For Participants Receiving Financial Assistance Before July 1, 2001
<b>2342</b>	Removes section 2342, Implementation of Phase-In Plan for Adults Receiving Assistance Before July 1, 2001.
<b>2375</b>	Adds reference to striking sanctions. Corrects rule citations. Replaces “DET” with “the Department of Labor (DOL).
<b>2375.1</b>	Replaces “district director” with “commissioner’s designee.”
<b>2375.2</b>	Updates Sanction Amounts subsection by replacing the \$75 sanction with a \$100 sanction in month 2 and a \$125 sanction in month 3. Corrects rule citation.
<b>2375.5</b>	Adds employability and life skills assessment requirement to meeting with case manager in the fourth month of sanction in a 12-month period.
<b>2376</b>	Adds “Striking” as a means of ending current and eliminating past sanctions.
<b>2379</b>	Adds Striking Sanctions section.
<b>2400</b>	Adds provision for funding some Postsecondary Education Program financial assistance grants with state funds claimed as TANF Maintenance of Effort (MOE)
<b>2451</b>	Adds provision to PSE Plan Requirements for the method of documenting and verifying hours of participation and satisfactory progress, specifically, documenting and verifying the number of hours scheduled for class time, studying, and preparing coursework. outside of the classroom.

### **Rulemaking Process**

#### ***A. Informal Public Input Process***

1. The proposed rule is expected to be filed with the Interagency Committee on Administrative Rules (ICAR) on October 1, 2010 and presented at its meeting on October 12, 2010.
2. The proposed rule is expected to be filed with the Secretary of State's Office and the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR) on October 15, 2010.
3. The Secretary of State will publish notice of rulemaking on their website on October 20, 2010.
4. The department will post the proposed rule on its website <http://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/rules> and notify advocates, subscribers, and members of the public of the proposed rule.

#### ***B. Formal Notice and Comment Period***

1. A public hearing will be held on Monday, November 29, 2010 at 1:00 p.m., in the DCF Commissioner's Conference Room, 5 North, State Office Complex, Waterbury, Vermont .
2. Written comments may be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m., on Monday, December 6, 2010 to Stella Bukanc, Policy Analyst, Economic Services Division, DCF; 103 South Main Street, Waterbury, Vermont 05671-1201, [stella.bukanc@ahs.state.vt.us](mailto:stella.bukanc@ahs.state.vt.us). Fax: (802) 241-2235.
3. On or before Friday, December 17, 2010 copies of the final proposed rule are expected to be filed with the Secretary of State and the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR).
1. The department expects to present the rule to LCAR in January, 2011.
2. The department expects to file the final rule no later than Monday, January 17, 2011.
3. The rule is expected to be effective on February 1, 2011.

To get more information about the Administrative Procedures Act and the rules applicable to state rulemaking go to the website of the Office of the Vermont Secretary of State at: <http://vermont-archives.org/aparules/> or call Louise Corliss at 828-2863

For information on upcoming hearings before the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules go to the website of the Vermont Legislature at: <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/schedule/schedule2.cfm> or call 828-5760.

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Vertical lines in the left margin indicate changes.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2300	Reach Up Services
2301	Definitions
2302	Case Management
2310	Support Services
2311	Support Services, Assessment, and the FDP
2312	Support Services Providers
2313	Types of Support Services
2314	Payment for Support Services
2315	Criteria for Purchase of Support Services
2316	Child Care Assistance
2317	Incentive Payments
2320	Participation
2321	Participation Requirements
2322	Participation Phases
2330	Family Development Plans
2331	Employment Goal
2332	Development of the FDP
2333	FDP Reviews and Modifications
2334	FDP Requirements
2335	Adult Participants
2336	Minor Parents
2337	Out-of-School Youth
2340	Work Requirements
2341	Work-Ready Determination
2342	Reserved
2343	Work Requirement Hours
	Table - Work Requirement Hours
2350	Work and Work Activities
2351	Financial Literacy Classes
2352	Work Activity Displacement Policy
2353	Fair Labor Standards Act
2360	Deferments and Modifications
2361	Presumption of Capacity to Work
2362	Deferment of Requirements
2363	Deferment or Modification of Work Requirement
2370	Noncompliance and Good Cause
2371	Types of Noncompliance
2372	Determination of Good Cause
2373	Good Cause Criteria
2374	Conciliation
2375	Sanctions for Noncompliance

---

TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2376	Sanctions – Cure, Forgiveness, and Striking
2377	Curing Sanctions
2378	Forgiveness of Past Sanctions
2379	Striking Sanctions
2380	Notice and Appeal
2390	Solely State-Funded Programs and Separate State Programs p.2
2391	Solely State-Funded Programs
2392	Exemption from 60-Month Limit
2393	Assignment to the Solely State-Funded Programs
2394	Separate State Funds Programs
2395	Child Support Distribution

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Methods of Investigation

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2211      Methods of Investigation

The applicant is the primary source of information about his need and eligibility for aid or benefits. Verification of information furnished on the signed application and through interviews is not required except as specified at 2211.3 Verification or elsewhere in rules.

Reliance on the applicant as the primary source of information to establish eligibility recognizes the right to privacy, but also places responsibility on the applicant to furnish necessary information completely and accurately or, when needed, to give consent to obtain such information elsewhere. The signature of an applicant or spouse, authorized representative, or legal guardian on an application must certify under penalty of perjury that information on the application pertaining to all members of the assistance group is correct and complete. Only one adult applicant signature is required (2208, Application). Department responsibility to assist an applicant to establish eligibility requires careful explanation and interpretation of program eligibility criteria and information needed to assess the applicant's circumstances against such eligibility criteria.

An applicant has a right to refuse to give information, or to submit required proof. Such refusal of information or action necessary to establish eligibility will result in denial or closure of aid or benefits. Willful misrepresentation of applicant circumstances will also result in legal action under fraud statutes. Department staff shall make every effort to assure full applicant understanding of the consequences of refusal to take necessary action to establish eligibility and/or misrepresentation of individual circumstances.

An individual may apply for aid or benefits through another person; for example: an authorized representative; a person acting responsibly for an incompetent or incapacitated individual; surviving relative or estate administrator of a deceased person. The individual acting for the applicant is, in such situations, considered the primary source of information, subject to the same rights, responsibilities and consequences for the applicant as an applicant acting directly for himself.

2211.1      Statement of Need

The applicant's signed statement of need, contained within the application forms for the programs applied for, is the primary source document for information about the applicant's circumstances.

Application forms are designed to be as clear and simple to complete as possible, with due regard for the information necessary to establish eligibility. Appropriate descriptions of applicant rights and responsibilities, including penalties for willful misrepresentation of circumstances, are set forth immediately before the applicant's signature.

A signed Application form shall be sufficient to apply for Reach Up.

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Methods of Investigation

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2211.2 Interviews

An interview is required for all Reach Up applications. Except as specified below, this interview shall be a personal face-to-face interview conducted privately with the applicant, who may have a representative present for assistance. Such interviews may be conducted in the applicant's home or another mutually convenient location when individual circumstances of health or unusual transportation problems make an office interview difficult.

The department will do telephone interviews of applicants who are not mandatory members of the assistance group when they apply for financial assistance only on behalf of the children in the household; the department will provide a face-to-face interview at the applicant's request. Applicants who meet these criteria include, and are not limited to, caretaker guardians whose income or resources exceed the limits for inclusion in the assistance group or parents who are not included in the assistance group because they receive SSI/AABD benefits.

2211.3 Verification

Verification, defined as a written entry in the case record of third-party or documentary confirmation of facts stated by an applicant, shall be required for the items listed below when the department is processing an initial application or eligibility redetermination for Reach Up financial assistance. Verification of individual items on this list is required when the participant reports a change in circumstances relating to that item or when the department receives information from some other source that indicates the most recent information reported by the participant may not be correct.

- A. All non-excluded income (amount and source).
- B. All non-excluded resources, within \$200 of the limit.
- C. Actual dependent care costs claimed as a work expense and used as a deduction from earned income.
- D. Shelter costs incurred.
- E. High risk pregnancy for a woman with no dependent children.
- F. Paternity of biological father not married to child's mother.
- G. Collateral information affecting eligibility or benefits.
- H. Application for a social security number if the individual does not have one.

Verification may be required for the following, if questionable:

- A. Identity and residency.
- B. Age, citizenship, or alien status for any member of the assistance group.
- C. Any other information that affects eligibility or amount of benefits.



### Methods of Investigation

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Written verification statements shall include sufficient detail to enable independent reviewer evaluation of the reasonableness of the resulting eligibility decision, including but not limited to a description of method used, dates, sources, summary of information obtained, and any computations required. If the wage earner cannot furnish complete pay stubs or similar verification, a statement of wages must be obtained from the employer.

The department shall verify and document earnings received in the prior 30 days for applicants and participants. For continuing eligibility, earnings must be verified at least once every six months

However, if the earnings received in this 30-day period are not representative of current or future circumstances, then a best estimate must be made based on information and documentation obtained during the eligibility determination or redetermination. In such cases this alternative figure will be used to estimate monthly earnings.

When earnings have just begun or changed, available paystubs, a statement from the employer on wages and predicted hours of employment, or similar verification shall be used to make a best estimate of future earnings.

A change in dependent care costs is defined as a change in one or more of the following circumstances relating to the care provided:

- A. the rate paid (hourly, daily, weekly, monthly) for required care;
- B. person or facility providing care;
- C. amount (number of hours per week) of care required; or
- D. number of children or incapacitated adults requiring care.

A variation in dependent care costs caused solely by a school vacation, or illness or vacation on the part of the employed participant, lasting no longer than two weeks, shall not be considered a change in dependent care costs.

The following standard is to be applied when monthly dependent care costs vary as a result of minor fluctuations in the amount of employment-related dependent care required. If total dependent care costs paid in the reporting month are no greater than 25 percent above or no less than 25 percent below the most recent monthly dependent care costs, the variation in dependent care costs will not fall within the department's definition of a change in dependent care costs and, therefore, will not require verification.

### Methods of Investigation

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Verification of income from self-employment requires careful evaluation by the eligibility worker considering the following:

- A. If the applicant or participant has been self-employed for a period of time and has reported this income to IRS, the latest income tax return can be used as one source, providing it reflects the current situation, for example, same type of self-employment, approximately the same number of hours and wages for employment.
- B. An applicant or participant who has recently become self-employed shall provide a written statement of potential monthly income and shall be required to maintain accurate records (for example, income received, source of income, hours of work) and to provide such records for bi-monthly review. In most cases this bimonthly review will continue until income has been reported to IRS. That income tax return can then be used as the primary source of verification as long as it continues to reflect the current situation.

Denial or closure shall result if an applicant or recipient:

- fails without good cause to submit documentation necessary for verification;
- fails without good cause to consent to verification of any eligibility factor;
- fails without good cause to cooperate in any investigation necessary to support an affirmative decision of eligibility.

Good cause reasons include:

- A. Natural disasters, such as fires or floods, having a direct impact on the applicant/recipient or an immediate family member.
- B. Illness of such severity on the part of the applicant/recipient or an immediate family member that the applicant/recipient is unable to direct his or her personal affairs.
- C. Refusal of an employer to provide earned income verification, or the unavailability of an employer to provide verification before the deadline.
- D. Lost or stolen mail which is confirmed by the Postal Service.
- E. Refusal of a landlord to verify housing expense.
- F. Death of the applicant/recipient or an immediate family member.
- G. Inability of a third party (e.g. Social Security Administration) to provide the necessary documentation within the designated time period.

Other reasons may be found to constitute good cause with the approval of the District Director or his or her designee.

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Methods of Investigation

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2211.4     Collateral Sources

Contact with sources other than the applicant may be made concerning his eligibility for aid or benefits. These contacts are limited to interviews, telephone calls, or correspondence necessary to obtain information required to make a decision on eligibility. Information requested from collateral sources is limited to the specific eligibility factors in question and may be made without the consent of the client when information by the client is either questionable or insufficient to determine eligibility.

Common collateral sources are relatives, landlords, employers, town officials, Town Service Officers, public records, doctors, medical facilities, etc. Other agencies which have worked with the client are generally the best source of collateral information.

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Sanctions for Noncompliance

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2375      Sanctions for Noncompliance

If a participating adult, including a minor parent, fails to comply with services component requirements, the department shall impose a fiscal sanction by reducing the financial assistance grant of the sanctioned adult's family (2375.2). This section does not apply to sanctions imposed on out-of-school youths (2337) or adults failing to report to the Department of Labor (DOL) (2335.1).

A sanction is imposed only if conciliation (2374) is unsuccessful or not available. Once a fiscal sanction has been imposed, the sanctioned adult who chooses to demonstrate compliance with program requirements may cure the sanction and have the full grant amount restored (2377). The adult who complies with service component requirements for 12 consecutive months following fiscal sanctions will have the past sanctions forgiven (2378). When an employability and life skills assessment in the fourth month of sanction in a 12-month period (2375.5) reveals that a sanctioned adult should have had a modified or deferred work requirement, the department shall strike the sanction (2379) and forgive (2378) sanctions incorrectly assessed.

When the case manager determines, at any time during the sanctions process, that the sanctioned individual had good cause for the noncompliance, the case manager shall terminate the sanctions. The months of sanction associated with this instance of noncompliance shall not count as months of sanction for the purposes of this section.

For the purposes of this section, the family's financial assistance grant is the amount the family would receive after imposition of sanctions due to noncooperation with the pursuit of child support, if any, but before recoupment of a previous overpayment.

2375.1      Independent Review and Notice

Before a fiscal sanction is imposed, the commissioner's designee shall review the basis for the action. The review shall include consideration of the sanctioned participant's circumstances, possible good cause reasons for the noncompliance, the basis for the case manager's determination of noncompliance, and the department's compliance with pre-sanction processing requirements.

The sanction process begins with a written notice to the individual at least 10 days before the sanction is scheduled to begin. This notice explains the action being taken, the reason for the action, and the adult's right to appeal the decision. The individual then has 90 days in which to request a fair hearing. If the individual requests a fair hearing before the sanction is applied to the grant, the sanction will not be applied while the appeal is pending.

2375.2      Sanction Amounts

For a first month in which an adult is sanctioned, the family's financial assistance grant shall be reduced by the amount of \$75.00 for each adult subject to a fiscal sanction.

For a second cumulative month in which an adult is sanctioned, the family's financial assistance grant shall be reduced by the amount of \$100.00 for each adult subject to a fiscal sanction.

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Sanctions for Noncompliance

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For a third cumulative month in which an adult is sanctioned, the family's financial assistance grant shall be reduced by the amount or \$125.00 for each adult subject to a fiscal sanction.

For the fourth cumulative month and any subsequent month in which an adult is sanctioned, the family's financial assistance grant shall be reduced by the amount of \$150.00 for each adult subject to a fiscal sanction.

The \$150.00 sanction amount shall be increased to \$225.00 per month if:

- the sanctioned adult has received 60 or more cumulative months of assistance; and
- the sanctioned adult has 12 or more cumulative months of sanctions.

The sanction amount is based upon the cumulative number of months the adult has been sanctioned since July 1, 2001, even if the months are not consecutive. When a financial assistance grant terminates because the amount of the sanction equals or exceeds the grant, that month shall be counted as a month of sanction. When a financial assistance grant terminates because an adult fails to report as required (2375.5), the month the benefits are forfeited shall be counted as a month of sanction.

### 2375.3 Housing Protection Limitation on Sanction Amounts

During the first six cumulative months of sanction, the amount of the sanction may be limited to protect the family's ability to pay its housing costs. The department shall consider the family's other countable income available for payment of housing costs. The amount of housing costs protected under this provision equals either the family's actual incurred housing costs or the applicable maximum housing allowance, whichever is less, minus the family's other countable income. The amount of the special needs housing supplement is not included in the determination of the amount of allowable protected housing costs.

If the family's monthly benefit after the imposition of the full sanction amount equals or exceeds its protected housing costs, the grant shall be reduced by the full sanction amount. If the family's protected housing costs are more than this reduced benefit amount, however, the amount of the sanction shall equal either the family's financial assistance grant minus its protected housing costs or zero, whichever is more. Any month when the sanction is zero shall count as a month of sanction.

After the first six cumulative months of sanction, the department shall reduce the family's grant without consideration of the housing protection limitation. If the sanction amount exceeds the grant amount, the financial assistance terminates.

A family that has exhausted its six-month housing protection limitation may be eligible for another six-month housing protection period. To qualify for another housing protection period, the family must have a period of 36 months without sanction for noncompliance with services component requirements following the initial housing protection period. Each of the 36 months must be a month during which the family is not receiving Reach Up financial assistance or a month during which the family is participating in Reach Up without sanction.

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Sanctions for Noncompliance

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2375.4 Vendor Payment of Housing Costs

The department shall provide housing expenses by vendor payment, paying as much of the incurred housing costs that can be paid from the amount of the grant that remains after sanctions have been applied. The actual housing costs include rent, mortgage, property taxes, allowable maintenance and repairs, and room and board.

If there is any balance remaining after the housing costs are deducted, the remaining amount shall be paid to the family in two payments. Sixty percent of any remainder shall be paid within the first half of the calendar month and forty percent within the second half of the month.

2375.5 Meeting With Case Manager

To receive any financial assistance, including vendor rent payments, a sanctioned adult must meet with the case manager at least once per month and participate in assessments as directed by the case manager. This meeting may take place in the district office, a community location, or in the participant's home, whichever best facilitates the FDP goals. For minor parents, this meeting shall be a home visit completed by the minor parent's case manager. An unexcused failure to meet with the case manager may result in closure of the family's grant and forfeiture of that month's financial assistance.

The purpose of the meeting shall be to assess the individual and develop the family development plan, when such tasks have not been completed; reassess or review and revise the FDP as appropriate; and encourage the participant to cure the sanction.

For the meeting with the case manager in the fourth month of sanction in a 12-month period, an adult subject to a fiscal sanction and a second participating adult in the family shall engage in an assessment that includes their employability and life skills capabilities. If the assessment reveals that a sanctioned adult should have had a modified or deferred work requirement while sanctioned, the department shall strike the sanction (2379), review all prior sanctions, forgive (2378) those incorrectly assessed, and modify the FDP.

The meeting with the case manager shall take place by the 16<sup>th</sup> of each month; otherwise, Reach Up financial assistance terminates, and that month's benefit is forfeited. In any given month, the case manager may waive the meeting requirement if, in the judgment of the case manager, severe illness, death in the family, or other equally compelling reason warrants an exception.

A participant is encouraged to notify the case manager on or before the date of a meeting if unable to attend as scheduled. The case manager shall reschedule the meeting to be held as soon as administratively possible and no later than the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month.

If the sanctioned individual attends a meeting after the 16<sup>th</sup> but before the end of a month, benefits for the following month are reinstated at the appropriate sanctioned level, and, if the individual demonstrates good cause for failure to attend the meeting by the 16<sup>th</sup>, the department will disburse the current month's benefit.

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Sanctions - Cure and Forgiveness

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2376     Sanctions – Cure, Forgiveness and Striking

Under specific circumstances, current sanctions may be cured or stricken, and previous sanctions may be forgiven. Ending current sanctions is referred to in this rule as curing the sanctions (2377). Eliminating past sanctions is referred to in this rule as forgiving the sanctions (2378). Removing the current sanction when assessment in the fourth month of sanction in a 12-month period reveals that the sanctioned adult should have had a modified or deferred work requirement is referred to in this rule as striking the sanction (2379). Previous sanctions revealed by the assessment as being inappropriate are forgiven (2378).

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Sanctions for Noncompliance

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2379 Striking Sanctions

When an employability and life skills capabilities assessment in the fourth month of sanction in a 12-month period (2375.5) reveals that a sanctioned adult should have had a modified or deferred work requirement during the current month or earlier months of sanction, the department shall modify the participant's family development plan and strike the applicable sanctions.

The department shall restore the full grant amount to which the family is entitled in the current month and shall treat the months of sanction incorrectly applied as if the sanction was forgiven (2378).



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Post Secondary Education (PSE)

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2400      Postsecondary Education (PSE)

The postsecondary education (PSE) program is a solely state-funded program to assist parents in eligible low-income families to obtain two- or four-year postsecondary undergraduate degrees in fields directly related to employment. The PSE program provides financial assistance, case management, and support services. In eligible two-parent families, only one parent at a time may participate in the PSE program and the second parent must be employed if able to work. Eligibility is based on financial and non-financial criteria.

The PSE program is not an entitlement program. Participation may be denied to applicants meeting the eligibility criteria if program funds are insufficient for all eligible applicants to participate. If program funds are insufficient to serve all eligible applicants, the priorities for admission to the PSE program established by these regulations will be followed.

At the discretion of the commissioner, the department may fund certain families' PSE financial assistance with state funds claimed as TANF Maintenance of Effort (MOE) when such funding meets the intent of TANF regulations and the participating family is meeting the applicable Reach Up work requirement with hours in postsecondary education or other approved work activity.

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PSE Plan Requirements

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2451      PSE Plan Requirements

A.      Each applicant or participating parent's PSE plan shall include the following:

1. The name and location of the college at which the applicant or participating parent is matriculating or matriculated.
2. A statement of the occupational goal that the applicant or participating parent intends to pursue after receiving the postsecondary undergraduate degree and why the applicant or participating parent wishes to pursue this occupation.
3. The labor market area in which the applicant or participating parent plans to seek employment in this occupation.
4. The "field directly related to employment" in which the participating parent or applicant proposes to complete the postsecondary degree and the following supporting information that demonstrates the necessary connection between the parent's employment goal and the field of study:
  - a. Documentation from three or more employers demonstrating the proposed field of study is these employers' preferred postsecondary field of study for the occupation the parent seeks to enter. Each employer documentation shall consist of one of the following: a Department of Labor (or comparable agency in another state) job listing, a job listing from a college placement office, a classified advertisement, information about desired qualifications for a position from an employer's web site, a letter from an employer, or comparable employer-specific documentation. When this documentation is available for at least one but fewer than three employers in the labor market area in which the parent intends to seek employment, the parent may substitute documentation from an employer in any labor market area in Vermont or in any labor market area that has boundaries contiguous with Vermont's borders.

This documentation requirement shall be waived in the case of a degree program in a field of study that is closely linked to an occupation or is "occupation-specific." Examples of such programs include a degree program in dental hygiene when the applicant seeks to become employed as a dental hygienist or a degree program in accounting when an applicant seeks to become employed as an accountant.
  - b. With reference to the employers for which documentation is submitted pursuant to "a" above, the job titles for positions in the parent's chosen occupation and the entry-level wage for each position. When documentation of field of study preference in "a" above has been waived, documentation from three sources of the entry-level wage in the chosen occupation remains a requirement.
  - c. The job titles for other occupations that can be pursued with this degree and field of study.

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PSE Plan Requirements

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- d. A description of the career exploration activities the parent has completed to gather this information.
  - e. A justification for the need of a four-year degree to achieve the occupational goal if the applicant is seeking a four-year degree in a field in which a two-year degree is commonly accepted for entry into the occupation.
5. A schedule that ensures that the applicant or participating parent will complete the coursework necessary for a two-year postsecondary undergraduate degree within three years and for a four-year postsecondary undergraduate degree within five years or a shorter time period if required by paragraph 6 or 7 below. The schedule should reflect consideration of and address the individual's existing circumstances and responsibilities that may reasonably affect the applicant's ability to maintain the schedule and eligibility, such as the age of the participant's youngest child, child care and transportation.
- An initial schedule for degree completion may exceed the three- and five-year time frames only when the applicant has provided documentation, to the satisfaction of the commissioner, that additional time is necessary for completion due to the effects of the applicant's disability. Subsequent modifications to the schedule for degree completion may be made pursuant to rule 2454.
- 6. A schedule reflecting that, when an applicant has at least 15 credit hours of course credits that can be applied to the degree being pursued, four months for every 15 credit hours of course work that can be applied to the degree has been deducted from the three-year time period allowed for a two-year postsecondary undergraduate degree or the five-year time period allowed for a four-year postsecondary undergraduate degree.
  - 7. A schedule reflecting that, when a participating parent who has already obtained a two-year postsecondary undergraduate degree through participation in the PSE program is pursuing a four-year postsecondary undergraduate degree, the time period that was used to obtain the two-year degree has been subtracted from the five-year time period allowed for a four-year degree.
  - 8. The estimated cost per semester or academic term, including tuition and fees that apply to all students, and the financial resources the applicant or participating parent plans to use to pay for these costs.
  - 9. During the last year of the degree program, the parent shall seek employment using the services of the college's career placement office. If the college has no career placement office, the parent shall seek employment using the services of the Department of Labor's local career resource center.
  - 10. The number of hours scheduled for class time, the estimated number of hours needed for studying and preparing coursework outside of the classroom, and the method of documenting and verifying actual hours of participation and satisfactory progress.